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SOURCE            Nan-fang Jih-pao.

FIRST KWANGTUNG COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE  
CALLS FOR REPAIR OF HIGHWAYS AS MAIN 1953 TASK

[Summary: The main task for 1953 in the transportation field was outlined by Yang Huan-chang, deputy chief of the Department of Communications of the Kwangtung People's Government. In a speech given before the First Kwangtung Communications Conference, he called for the repair and maintenance of existing motor highways and local roads and for the elimination of waste in fuel, tires, etc., in order to reduce the costs of transportation.

Tseng T'ien-chieh, also deputy chief of the Department of Communications, summarized the achievements made during the past 3 years, giving data on motor vehicle and inland waterway transportation facilities.<sup>7</sup>

The first Kwangtung Communications Conference was convened by the Communications Department of the Kwangtung People's Government at Canton 27 November - 3 December 1952, with more than 140 leading men from the government communications control and operating agencies in attendance. Among the important items on the program were a report on the Central-South China Administrative Area Third Communications Conference, a report on the transportation situation in Kwangtung during the past 3 years by Tseng T'ien-chieh, deputy chief of the Kwangtung Department of Communications, a statement by Yang Huang-chang, another deputy chief of the same department, concerning the transportation policy and task in Kwangtung for 1953, and reports by Chou Ts'ai, chief of the Inland Waterway Control Bureau, and by Chin To, chief of the Provincial Transportation Bureau.

Yang Huang-chang had the following to say in his report:

"In order that the transportation facilities of the province may measure up to the needs of urban-rural goods exchange in 1953 and satisfactorily meet the requirements of the basic construction program, the greatest importance will be attached to the repair and maintenance of the existing motor highways and to the repair of local roads for the use of animal-drawn and hand-drawn

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carts and bicycles, especially in those areas near military bases and in the regions inhabited by minority nationalities. Emphasis is to be placed on safety to people and vehicles. Four economies to be sought to further reduce the costs of transportation include: avoiding waste of fuel and lubricants, eliminating waste of tires, reduction of repair costs, and reduction in the frequency of periodic overhauls. Passenger service is to be improved and freight service is to be expanded. The structure of the transportation network must be perfected and the terminal facilities must be improved. In the field of water transport, it is necessary that steamers and small boats provide complementary services, rather than competing with each other."

The following report on the speech of Tseng T'ien-chieh made before this conference is based on notes taken of his speech by a staff writer of this newspaper:

"Kwangtung is a province in which the development of highway and inland waterway transportation has kept pace with each other. The combined navigable length of the Pei Chiang, Tung Chiang, and Hsi Chiang is 7,500 kilometers, of which 3,994 kilometers are navigable by steamers. According to initial calculations, one third of the mileage of all the motor highways in the Central-South China Administrative Area is in Kwangtung. When Kwangtung was liberated [1949] barely 2,523 kilometers of highways were usable. At present, 8,345 kilometers are usable, which is 3.3 times the earlier figure.

"On the important all-weather highways, motor vehicles are able to operate at speeds of 35-45 kilometers per hour. On ordinary roads, they can travel at 30-35 kilometers per hour. Road maintenance is provided by a combination of regular road repair gangs and corvee labor. Much progress has been made in the direction of unified control, particularly in the matter of regulation of motor traffic and of chauffeurs.

"From April through December 1950, under the state-operated Motor Transport Company (now the Transportation Bureau) the routes to be covered each day by scheduled buses totaled only 917.2 kilometers. During these 9 months, the volume of passenger and freight traffic was 23,460,000 ton-kilometers. For another 9 months' period in 1952, January - September, under unified control, the length of scheduled bus lines was increased to 18,520 kilometers, or 20 times longer than in 1950. The volume of passenger and freight traffic during the same period was 59,360,000 ton-kilometers, or 2½ times the traffic of 1950.

"In 1949, bus fares under both public and private operations were unregulated. In the early part of 1951, the maximum bus fare was 1,600 yuan per person per kilometer, and 15,000 yuan per ton-kilometer, which was far above the actual cost. Beginning in July 1951, fares were regulated at 37 percent less than at the first of the year. On 15 November 1952, subsequent to the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Movements, and as a result of more efficient and conscientious cooperation of the workers, the passenger fares were reduced to 430 yuan per kilometer on gasoline-burning buses, and 400 yuan per kilometer on charcoal-gas-burning buses. Freight rates on gasoline trucks are now 3,000 yuan per ton-kilometer, and 2,800 yuan on charcoal-gas trucks.

"In October 1952, the employees on all the bus and truck lines under the Transportation Bureau entered the patriotic competition movement which had as its objectives, safety, the 'four economies,' and 2,000-ton-kilometers hauled per vehicle per month. The crew of Ho P'ei-ch'ang of the Chan-chiang station, operation ten vehicles, set a record by averaging 2,401 ton-kilometers per vehicle per month, which was 20 percent better than the set goal. Two drivers with individual vehicles, made records of 4,370 and 4,227 ton-kilometers in one month.

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"Costs of fuel, lubricants, and tires were also reduced. Formerly, on the average, 66 kilograms of charcoal were required for each 100 kilometers of truck travel. This figure was brought down to 40 kilograms per 100 kilometers. Tire kilometrage was increased from 12,500 kilometers to 22,000 kilometers. The kilometrage traveled between complete overhaul jobs was increased from 10,000 to 20,000 kilometers. Some individual trucks covered 48,000 kilometers before requiring an overhaul.

"As for water transportation, smuggling and piracy were rampant in the past, and a boat trip was taken at the risk of one's life. Now that is all changed. On the waterways in 1951, 3,095,342 passengers and 2,049,365 tons of freight were carried (excluding figures for Hainan and the Lei-chou peninsula). This was 27.86 percent above the target for passenger traffic, and 143.29 percent above the target for freight transport assigned by the Central-South China area Department of Communications. This volume of water traffic for the province was 31 percent more than 1947. For the harbor of Canton, the volume of passenger traffic for 1951 was 33 percent greater than in 1950, and the freight traffic was 243.34 percent greater in 1951 than in 1950.

"In the first half of 1952, freight traffic was 153.6 percent greater than in the corresponding period of 1951. As to charges, in early 1950 the situation was quite unsettled (the Inland Waterways Control Bureau had not been organized) but by the end of 1950, the rates had been standardized. By April 1951, reductions of 32.6 percent for freight and of 25.47 percent for passengers had been effected. In August 1952, overage boats were retired and a rule fixing the number of crew members and maximum number of passengers on a given ship was adopted. In addition, certain fees collected by boatmen were abolished and third-class and second-class passenger fares were reduced by 13.1 percent and 50 percent, respectively. Transportation costs on the Hsi Chiang boats of the most important cargo items, namely, grain, rice, brown sugar, cinnamon bark, live pigs, domestic animals and poultry, were also substantially reduced.

"During the past 3 years, the Inland Waterways Control Bureau has succeeded in improving transportation facilities substantially by working out cooperative arrangements for shipping between public and private transportation agencies. At present, cooperative arrangements for through transport for passengers and freight by regular scheduled runs are in effect in 16 places. Jointly owned transport agencies are operating in five places. Subsequent to the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Movements, the Control Bureau helped to set up a number of offices supported and used by two or more parties. These offices are used by them to coordinate nonscheduled operation of boats and barges and have helped to regulate supplementary shipping facilities.

"Notwithstanding the aforementioned progress, the state-owned transport agencies are still inferior to commercial agencies in the volume of operations, and they do not yet exercise a dominating economic influence. This is particularly true in the field of freight traffic. In the past, the government pursued a wrong policy of attaching more importance to passenger transportation; whereas greater importance should be on freight transportation. Hereafter, the capacity and strength of state-owned waterway transport agencies must be built up."

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